



## **WWII PFC Lawrence R. Gordon remains to be reinterred Aug. 13 in Eastend, Sask., 70 years after MIA**

*Run For The Wall honors his service, sacrifice on historic Midway Route across America May 14-24*

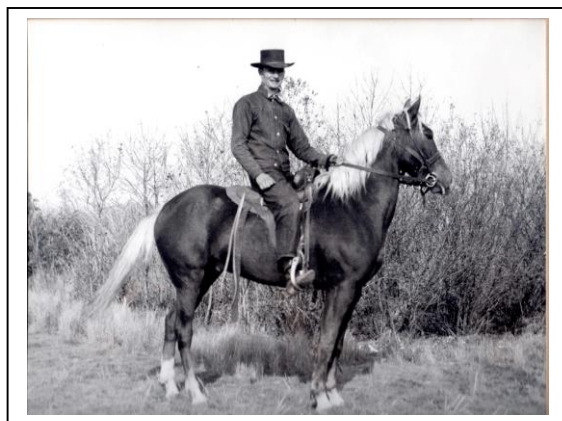
*From warhistoryonline.com with some clarifications from Jed Henry*

“PFC Lawrence R. Gordon grew up in Saskatchewan and later on went to work in Wyoming. Shortly after the Pearl Harbor attack, he enlisted in the U.S. Army, deciding that the Canadian Scottish Regiment wasn’t as well equipped.

He sent his last letter home at age 28, just before he died, while he was fighting at Saint Lo, north of Normandy.

On Aug. 13, 1944, it is believed Gordon was in command of an armored vehicle during an operation to stop the Germans from escaping through the Falaise Gap. It is also believed that Gordon and James Andrew Bowman, a gunner who was next to him in the turret, were shot at by a German Motorcyclist.

The driver of the vehicle died two days later. The only survivor was Pvt. Kurtz, who wrote a report on that day. Kurtz died in January 2011.



Filmmaker Jed Henry became interested in Gordon’s story while shooting a documentary about his grandfather, Staff Sgt. David L. Henry of Viroqua, in November 2011. His grandfather, just like Gordon, was part of the 199-man Reconnaissance Company, and died at home when Henry was only 3 years old. He worked together with a team of researchers from around the country to find out whether or not the person buried as a German soldier more than 68 years ago, was U.S. Army Pfc. Lawrence S. Gordon. Gordon’s body was in first instance labeled as Unknown X-3 and found buried next to another soldier tagged Unknown X-2, on Aug. 13, 1944, the [Journal Sentinel](#) reports.

There was a teeth scan done on X-3, but no fingerprints taken. Dental charts compared with PFC Gordon’s were found consistent. While The X-2 was later identified by the FBI as U.S. Army Pvt. James Andrew Bowman, the man who was riding next to Gordon when they were hit by the shell. Gordon, the X-3 was found



“completely clothed in German equipment”. The explanation following the discovery states that it might have been possible that Gordon exchanged his American undershirt and trousers with the German ones because they were cooler than the U.S. Army uniform. That, however, doesn’t mean the outer layer of clothing was part of the German uniform as well.

Gordon’s mother was first told of her son’s death, almost 8 months later, with no information on where his grave was located. She desperately tried to find

out where her son was put to rest and she died without ever knowing. Nobody in the family knew for sure that Gordon’s body was missing, until his nephew, Lawrence R. Gordon, a lawyer in Medicine Hat, Alberta, went searching for his grave in France in 2000. He promised his father that he would find his uncle’s final resting place but instead he found his name written on the wall, among other missing in action servicemen, at Brittany American Cemetery near St. James, Normandy. Later, Gordon’s body was exhumed and DNA tests, done on the saliva collected from his eight nephews, say there is a 99.995 percent chance they are related.

The remains were later exhumed and reburied in a German cemetery. In early 2013, officials at the Joint Prisoners of War, Missing in Action Accounting Command refused to exhume and test the remains, citing Defense Department policy. For years, they also refused to aid in the research effort. The French and German governments, however, determined there was enough evidence to proceed with testing of their own. Thanks to their efforts, Gordon’s remains will now be buried next to his father and brothers in Saskatchewan, Canada, on the 70th anniversary of his death, according to a statement given to Stars and Stripes by the multi-national research team responsible for making the case to the French and German governments.

The U.S. government was contacted many times over the years by PFC Gordon’s family to no avail.

Now, the latest word is it is highly likely that PFC Gordon will get full U.S. military honors, said Henry.



*rftw.org*

Run For The Wall’s historic Midway Route motorcycle mission will honor PFC Gordon for his service by riding across America, beginning in Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., May 14 and ending in Washington, D.C., the weekend of Memorial Day.

On Saturday, May 23 RFTW members will be joined on their walk to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial by Lawrence R. Gordon, nephew of PFC Gordon. At approximately 2:30 p.m. the RFTW group will escort Lawrence R. to the WWII Memorial to honor his uncle’s service.

Aug. 13, on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of PFC Gordon’s death, RFTW riders will attend the re-interment of PFC Gordon in Eastend, Sask. RFTW spokesmen say they expect more than 75 riders to make the trip into Canada for the service. For more information about contact Les “Easy” Williams, RFTW platoon leader and USMC colonel (ret.) at [boodawglkw@gmail.com](mailto:boodawglkw@gmail.com) or (970) 744-8624. *Photos courtesy Lawrence R. Gordon*